

## INSPIRATION FROM STRANGE SOURCES

Housewives Find Hints for Home Decoration in a Palais de Danse.

Intensive living is the new expression adapted by housekeepers from another use of the phrase and uttered by them to explain why they give up their large houses and vast apartments for smaller places, every part of which, even to closet and hall, is to be actually lived in. No place is like home under this use of the word "intensive" which has a nook or corner in it untouched by the family influence. In other words, the moderns have banished the attic, the parlor and the spare chamber.

Under these new conditions which apply well for town life, as for many it must be lived to-day, decoration and furnishing take on a new aspect. The beautiful must be combined with the useful in furniture and the decorative note is by necessity personal. Everything must be chosen by the housekeeper with a view to this vital understanding of what a modern small house or apartment must be, and she it is, not the fashionable decorator, who will decide upon the color note. Unless she begins with a definite idea of what she wants this to be she is apt to be harassed by the same doubts that beset the woman in the wall paper house, if she could but see the paper she adorns hung on a wall she could easily tell whether it was what she wanted or not.

This woman with original ideas and obsessed by the hope of making her own little place "intensive" wanders about looking everywhere to discover if these ideas have been applied by decorators at any time. Occasionally her quest is rewarded where she could scarcely have hoped to find success. In an application of black and white used by Winter and Ray in the latest dance place decorated by them one woman received an inspiration for the use of the same tones in her apartment. By lighting her hangings from their du Barry shade to a dull blue and fringing them with black and applying a narrow line of gold to door and wall panels this clever amateur decorator made over the professional's scheme to fit her own belongings.

As it happened the bulk of her china was in dull blue and the dining room opening off the living room took even more kindly to this color scheme. The same notes in the bed chamber were lightened by the use of French cretonne in blue and gold and blue. The apartment when ready made a congruous whole, livable everywhere, and while in effect one large living room, which was her dominant idea, was sufficiently diversified to avoid monotony.

Something akin to inspiration does frequently come to home makers in the strangest places. As the dining room, color, prohibited by the chaste tastes of the men who have studied only vast spaces, but employed by decorators to the above the door like the Club de Paris or the Club de Montmartre, has suggested possibilities to the observant woman who wants to make her house "different" and still keep it artistic. In the former place there is a dazzling peacock curtain elaborated with old bouillon and brighter spangles. In the shades of the blue color, hints must have been taken from the Egyptian, from the Egyptian, who never made the mistake of putting the layer of body color at the top. In this one gorgeous color scheme there are hints as to the use of blue that properly worked out entirely removes the sombre effect too often given by a cerulean combination. Confessing such a nest as one inspired by this peacock combination would be charming for a young couple who could live up to it with ease, it would hardly meet an "intensive" use.

A still lovelier color note has been suggested to another woman by the Pompeian villa shown in the Metropolitan Museum. When she gave up her house and moved into a Park avenue apartment the professional decorator whom she called in to consult advised that the small place of five rooms be done in a prevailing golden brown.

"No," said she, "I have been recently saturated with coral and I can see nothing else. Let us see what we can make of a subordinated shade of this color combined with an indefinite blue." The decorator shook a head doubtfully, but carried out his client's wish for an "intensive" apartment. It suggests Pompeii and is universally admired. The family like it because they find it impossible to be depressed therein.

What is to be learned (even if it is for the purpose of avoidance from form and color as applied by decorators entirely outside the home limit) will often prove distinctly valuable. One may glean only a hint, but that hint carefully nourished may blossom into an interior distinctly new but at the same time livable.

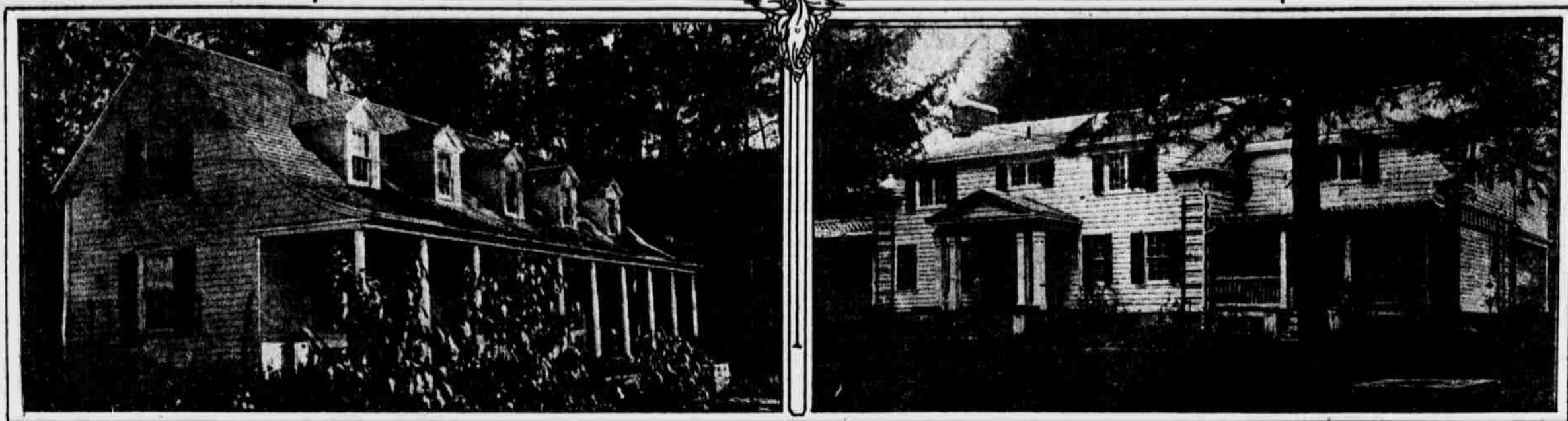
**ABRAM I. ELKUS TO SPEAK**

**Will Discuss Reconstruction at Bronx Board Luncheon.**

A regular monthly noonday luncheon of The Bronx Board of Trade will be held on Wednesday, May 7, at Bronx Temple, 145th street, between Walton and Gerard avenues. The topic for discussion will be "Reconstruction and Reemployment."

The speakers will be Abram I. Elkus, chairman of Governor Smith's Reconstruction Commission, and S. C. Mead, secretary of the Merchants Association of New York.

# REVIVAL OF OLD HOME SPIRIT BRINGS BIG DEMAND FOR REMODELLED FARM HOUSES



OLD FARM HOUSE ON THE ESTATE OF JOHN F. HAVEMEYER AT ARDSLEY-ON-HUDSON, ALTERED BY LEWIS COLT ALBRO, ARCHITECT.

## Phase of "Back to the Soil" Movement Fostered by War--Architects Find Broad Field of Activity in Rehabilitation of Old Homesteads

By HARRIETT S. GILLESPIE.

The charm of a remodelled farmhouse is a perennial one. It gets into the blood like a microbe and flows with all the cunning of a regular bug until the precise psychological moment arrives—invariably the first days of spring—when it suddenly comes to vigorous life, imbuing its victim with an insatiable desire to roam the countryside in search of abandoned farm houses of the sort to be easily turned into snug little homes for summer occupancy or all the year living at small expense. To folks prone to the malady the mere sight of a gently sloping Dutch roof, the glimpse of a low dormer, the suggestion of a brown stone chimney or the ancient aspect of weathered shingles is the will of the wisp that beckons them to fresh effort, the joy of discovery often being the only reward.

Many fanciful tales are still written about abandoned farms, but according to a farm specialist "there isn't no such animal" now. The lure of the land still lives, but the abandoned farms of which so much has been written, have, for the most part, gone the way of the auctioneer's hammer along with the fine old mahogany and old blue china that were once a part of them. Nearly all those farms whose owners have long since died, or moved away have been picked up and are now in the hands of real estate agents who are holding them for better prices, or else have been bought by individuals for whom the property has some sentimental value.

**Make Charming Country Homes.**

Upon these unworked tracts, however, are any number of abandoned farm buildings which, with a little land thrown in, may still be bought for the price of a few dollars. The farms lie in the vicinity of New York, but up in Vermont, through New Hampshire and Maine, are any number of small farms ranging from 75 to 500 acres with dwellings and outbuildings which are capable of being altered at small cost into the most charming of summer homes.

The hunt for decrepit farmhouses has resolved itself into a pastime for architects when they allow themselves the pleasure of a day's work.

## ADVOCATES USE OF CINDER CONCRETE

Builder Says It Will Cut Down Construction Costs and Resist Great Strain.

The acute housing situation and the necessity for the immediate resumption of building on a large scale have brought forth many suggestions as to how building enterprises may be accelerated. One of the most interesting of these is that proposed by Albert Oliver of New York, who is recognized as an authority upon building and construction matters. His plan calls for the more extensive use of cinder concrete in construction.

Mr. Oliver suggests that the building laws of New York city be amended to allow reinforced cinder concrete on steel beams to be used for walls of high buildings and as wall bearing construction for living houses up to four stories in height.

Cinder concrete floors in many of the best known buildings in the United States have demonstrated the strength

of pleasure—and lay folk who have fallen victims to their charms, so each spring you will know the inoculation has begun to work by the hordes of "tin lizzies" that haunt the turnpikes, each manned with an eager-eyed crew of "old farmhouse" worshippers on a still hunt for their objective. The older the house the better, for the chance of getting a bargain is greater and there is the joy of making something from nothing which is always stimulating, or in designing something different, a course which, if in the hands of a competent architect, as it does in every other way, presents an entirely new situation. The architects, free from war work, but with fresh building operations yet to be undertaken, are busy with the first time in many years to satisfy the more or less insistent demands of certain clients to remodel old farm buildings. As a result New York architects are pretty generally occupying themselves with alterations, since building costs are high, and in the main this phase of their work deals almost entirely with remodeling old farm dwellings.

**Old Home Has New Meaning.**

It wouldn't be right to say that either or both of these reasons are responsible for the renaissance of the early American farmhouse or for the demand which has arisen just now. There is a far deeper psychological principle involved, for which world events are responsible. The real underlying reason is because the "old home" has taken on a new significance since the war. The rehabilitation of these homes is, in some sense a memorial for those fine lads who gave their lives to defend just such homes from possible devastation. It is equally intended for those who come back with new ideals and the determination to maintain and perpetuate

of this material. It is claimed by those who favor the extensive use of cinder concrete, that as it has proved itself capable of successfully supporting great weights and withstanding strain and stress when used as floors, there are no valid reasons why the same material cannot satisfactorily replace bricks and other wall material.

The advantages of cinder concrete construction, it is said, will be many, chief among them a great saving in dead load in the walls of buildings, thereby affecting a large saving in the cost of steel structures. The plan proposed by Mr. Oliver contemplates pouring the concrete floor and the walls of the story immediately beneath as one operation.

It is proposed to weatherproof the walls with a coat of kumite after the method used by the cement gun companies on a great number of structures throughout the United States and Canada. The use of this material will result in thoroughly sealing up every void in the concrete and allow any finish that the architect may desire.

Cinder concrete is no longer in the experimental stage. Its fireproof and weight carrying capacity are no longer questioned. Cinder concrete walls of a test house erected at the Columbia University testing station in Brooklyn have stood an experiment lasting over forty hours, divided into four hour periods, during which they were subjected to heat at 1700 degrees Fahrenheit, followed by an immediate application of

water from a high pressure main. These walls were constructed by two Columbia undergraduates during their vacation, and the tests were conducted under the direction of Ira H. Wilson, engineer of the National Bureau of Standards, and Prof. James H. McGreggor of Columbia University. These walls are believed to have stood a greater fire and water stress than any walls ever tested in the United States.

"The real truth of the matter is that a first class construction material has been available for years and it is now proposed to take advantage of it in order to lower the cost of building and help relieve the present situation. A number of the leaders in the cinder concrete industry, in the near future, to urge an amendment to the building laws to permit its more extensive use, and there is no good reason why this amendment should not go through."

Cinder concrete has the advantage of being much cheaper than other forms of concrete and vast quantities of its component parts are daily going to waste in the past when its use was chiefly restricted to sidewalk construction. In recent years, however, cinder concrete floors have been used in hundreds of important buildings with complete satisfaction.

Some recent examples of the use of cinder concrete in structural work are the three story Edison Storage Battery Buildings at 247 West Thirty-fifth street, and the Baker Williams building, a ten story structure at Leroy and Greenwich streets, whose reinforced floors are of this material.

The floor panels of the Edison building are 21x23 feet wide and 10 inches thick and are designed to support 150 pounds per square foot. The panels of the Baker Williams building are 19x21 feet wide and 8 inches thick, and are designed to support 400 pounds per square foot on the first floor and 250 pounds on the upper floors. The floors in both buildings are reinforced by Clinton electrically welded wire cloth, and the Chew system of electrically welded, octagonal steel mattresses.

## MAYOR SURE TO SIGN TAX LIMITATION BILL

So Says Real Estate Board in Discussion of Measure.

Based on his optimism on the enthusiasm shown by real estate men, local owners and tenants at the hearing before Mayor Hylan last Tuesday morning, the Real Estate Board of New York, in a statement issued yesterday, confidently predicts that the city's Chief Executive will sign the bill limiting the tax on real estate in Greater New York to 2.5 per cent. This bill was passed by the Legislature on the condition that it would have to have the approval of Mayor Hylan before it became a law.

"After such a satisfactory hearing," reads the board's statement, "the Mayor will surely sign the measure, which will stimulate every real estate activity. While it is true that the benefit derived from the bill will, until 1922, be sentimental, yet settlement plays a large part in business."

all the fine old American traditions which the old New England farmhouses so splendidly represent.

So it will be seen that this renaissance of colonial farm architecture that is taking place is in reality a matter of deeper psychological import than is seen on the surface. It is a step toward paving the way for the desire of the returning soldier to go back to the soil, for those isn't the slightest doubt in the world but that hundreds and thousands of American lads, after their experience in France want, nay, are eager to take up farming. The remarks of a young Cornell graduate recently returned with the Twenty-seventh Division is typical of half the men you meet.

**Back to Nature His Dream.**

The young fellow is to remodel the old farmhouse and live in it after he marries the little girl who waited for him while he was soldiering, and to him as to many others the brightest prospect that opens after two years of warfare is to get close to nature and live true to our New American ideals the rest of their lives.

The most fertile field for remodeling operations just now is to be found in old estates such as have been retained in a family for generations and are kept for that very reason. Nearly every New York architect has contracts for one or more such alterations to his credit. One prominent Fifth avenue architect is at work upon three in Connecticut, each with a historical value. Happily, it doesn't often happen, he has been given carte blanche to do with them as he sees fit.

Lewis Colt Albro, whose houses are always marked by their picturesque roof lines, lives during the summer in a remodelled farmhouse which is a gem of its kind. He has been busy with a story dwelling built on typical colonial lines, with roof sloping toward the front, broad hall in the centre, with rooms either side and a wing running forward at right angles from the left front. Mr. Albro intentionally kept the house in its original state, the alterations tending mainly to provide modern comforts rather than to effect any conspicuous changes in its structural form. The architect owner, however, restored the

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detail in every particular so as to make it conform to the original model.

A very interesting example of an old farmhouse alteration by Mr. Albro is seen on the estate of John F. Havemeyer at Ardsley-on-Hudson. It is one of a small group of farm buildings which when Mr. Albro took hold of it was but a mere box of a house with nothing special to bring it into prominence. To-day it presents the appearance of an old Dutch colonial cottage and looks as though it had been there for years. It was altered at a cost of \$5,600.

To the original unit of six rooms Mr. Albro added its own length, practically making a two family house of it, put on a broad veranda upheld by ten small Colonial pillars to which the roof was made to slope down in the graceful sweep peculiar to the early Dutch houses. Five dormers were let into the roof, solid green shutters provided, and a picturesque grill set up in the center of the veranda which, while it supplies an artistic note, is virtually meant to divide the place over to the occupants. The old part is used by the head gardener and the new portion as bachelor quarters for week-end guests when the main house overflows.

While modern plumbing and a heating plant were the main new features introduced in the old house, the addition includes a large living room, 24x28 feet, with an enormous fireplace provided by the new chimney built at this end which also supplies a fire place in the bedroom above, almost a counterpart of the living room. To reach this bedroom, bath and smaller apartment on the second floor, a pretty staircase rises unobtrusively from the corner of the living room. The new unit is quite ideal for bachelor guests, affording both privacy and comfort. As a typical example of what can be made from a mere shell of four walls and a roof, this adorable little cottage furnishes good material to those seeking hints.

**Owner Must Be Sympathetic.**

Alfred Busselle has done some charming alterations of old farmhouses, a very delightful example of which is the old house at Chappaqua, remodelled at a cost of \$5,000, and another at Ossining which, with little original pretense to beauty, is now a charming cottage of the Dutch type. Mr. Busselle not only holds that only those with a real feeling for the Colonial are able to satisfactorily remodel the early American homes, but he goes further and says that it takes the right kind of person to live in an old house and I mean just that. It must be one who loves American tradition and who appreciates the solid virtues of domestic tranquillity—let none other presume to buy and remodel and live in an old American farmhouse."

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## KEW GARDENS HAS HAD RECORD SEASON

Plans Are Being Made to Open New Section of Property Very Shortly.

If what Kew Gardens has planned and accomplished in providing homes in time for the coming housing famine had been duplicated in other sections the serious problem involved would have been met for at least one class of home-seekers.

Immediately after the signing of the armistice the men responsible for the success of Kew Gardens took action to form a construction company and to bring together a high class and efficient building organization.

Even before the armistice the Kew Gardens management had foreseen the situation that would inevitably follow a conclusion of the war and the return

of our men from abroad, and had gone seriously into the question of securing building materials at nearest to production costs, and with the help of a well known firm of architects through study had been given to cost saving in the planning of their houses.

Early in February an announcement of the new building programme was made in The Sun, and brought so much more than the anticipated results that their building schedule has doubled and doubled again in the succeeding three months. At the present time houses representing a total investment of close to half a million dollars are under way, and the scope of the organization has been greatly increased to make possible the completion of further houses before October 1. In addition to approximately \$500,000 of sales for new home building the Kew Gardens Construction Company is starting a limited number of homes to be offered for sale on completion. The houses will range in prices from \$15,000 to \$25,000, including land.

Work is now rapidly progressing toward the opening of a new section of Kew Gardens, as over half the property remaining available in Kew Gardens for marketing this spring has been involved in these sales.

Recent sales of houses already erected have resulted in the further disposal of almost \$200,000 of property. Over a million dollars is thus involved in the total transactions at Kew Gardens so far this season.

## Banker Buys Elizabethan Residence at Montclair

Reginald H. Giles, treasurer of the Bankers Trust Company, has purchased the handsome Elizabethan residence at the southwest corner of Warren place and Harrison avenue, Montclair. The residence, which is of brick and half

equipped to specialize in domestic work. The owner as well must be properly equipped to own, appreciate and sympathetically occupy such a house.

"There are many besides purely sentimental reasons for selecting the early American farmhouses for remodeling. In the first place the location or placing of these old homes is usually good. The old settlers and their immediate successors were very wise in this respect. As a rule the houses open pleasantly to the breeze and are protected from the cold winds either by a rise of ground, groves of evergreen trees, or falling trees by the arrangement of the house plan itself.

"Again the immediate surroundings are already made. That is to say, large trees and old shrubs are usually to be found there, little if any grading is needed and the whole setting requires but a little supplementing in detail to be all that is desired. Those who have once built in a bare, exposed place will readily understand how much this means. There are usually also some accessory features of interest, some outbuildings, perhaps wood old fence, a well or other features which people would not be likely to reproduce, and yet being there add to the charm of the place.

**Defects Can Be Remedied.**

"Then there are almost always good outlines to the old house. Sometimes these have been obscured at some period of Victorian prosperity by the addition of a signawed porch or by assertive dormers, but these are minor matters which can easily be rectified. The general arrangement of the plan, while not providing large living rooms, bathrooms or commodious service quarters, is usually quite adaptable to such alterations and the ingenuity required in the work of alteration produces all the more interesting results.

"If compared with the cost of the old building, the cost of a new house of equal size it is of course impossible to speak generally, for a great deal depends on how much of the structural work can be left as it is. From the experience of many such operations I should say that the cost has averaged about one-half the total value of the completed building. Against this is to be weighed, on the one hand, the personality of the old house and, on the other, its acknowledged eccentricity.

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## BILL TO IMPROVE WATERWAY PASSED

Legislature Provides Means for Widening Newtown Creek

Among the last acts of the Legislature was the passage of the bill introduced by Senator Peter J. McGarry of Queens giving the Board of Estimate the power to proceed with the plans for the straightening and widening of Newtown Creek. According to this bill, which was similar in its provisions to the bill for the straightening and widening of Flushing Creek, the Borough President of Queens is authorized to make the necessary maps for the improvement, after which they are to be submitted to the Board of Estimate for approval. The corporation council is then authorized to acquire the necessary land, either by condemnation or

concession. Governor Smith indicated to the officials of the city that he will give the measure his approval, and as a result Borough President Connolly, by orders which he gave to the topographical bureau, has already started the work. Conferences are to be held with owners along the creek, with officials of the Borough of Brooklyn, as some of the land to be taken will be in that borough, with officials of the Dock Department and with engineers of the United States War Department, because the plans will have to be finally approved by the United States Government owing to the fact that a large part of the cost of the improvement is to be paid for by the national appropriation.

The purpose of the undertaking is to obtain a wider and deeper channel to facilitate the great commerce of Newtown Creek, which carries merchandise valued at a quarter of a billion dollars annually, which is greater than the total value of all the manufactured products of either Kansas City, Minneapolis or San Francisco, and greater than the value of exports from Boston or Philadelphia.

**REAL ESTATE AT AUCTION.**

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**Imph. Day**  
Auctioneer.

## Real Estate at Public Auction SPECIAL SALES DAY Tuesday, May 20th

AT NOON AT EXCHANGE SALESROOM, 14 VESLEY ST., N. Y. CITY.

**SPECIAL SALES**

**346 to 350 W. 47th St.** (Near 5th Ave.) To Be Sold Separately. To close an estate. Three five-story brownstone tenements. Size 25x100.5 each. **MICHAEL J. SWENNEY, Esq., Atty.** 261 Broadway, N. Y. C.

**272 West 38th St.** (Near Eighth Ave.) Four-story brick building occupied as boarding house. Size 18x50x8. **BUNN & DALY, Esqs., Atty.** 261 Broadway, N. Y. C.

**S. W. Cor. Willow Av. & 137th St.** (Near 137th St.) Large vacant plot, ready for immediate improvement. Size 65x100. **BRONX.**

**Monmouth Beach, N. J.** Overlooking Atlantic Ocean. Three-story frame residence containing 18 rooms, on Ocean Park & Railroad Ave. All improvements; also garage. Size 310x206x75x125.

**Narragansett Pier, R. I.** "GREEN INN" Three-story frame hotel containing 40 double rooms; overlooking Atlantic Ocean. Recently renovated and in excellent condition. Sold fully furnished; also large garage, capable of accommodating 50 autos. Property comprises about one-half acre. Two natural springs on property.

**EXECUTORS' SALES**

**EST. LUCIA A. PALMER, DEC'D.** **EST. ALBERT G. STINER, DEC'D.**

**73 Highland Ave., YONKERS, N. Y.** Two large plots located on Broadway and Avon Place, near L. I. R. Station. Size 5x100x100, and 100x25x45 ft. **DECHES & CALDWELL, Esqs., Atty.** 271 Broadway, N. Y. C.

**VOLUNTARY SALE**

**196 Lenox Road (Near Rogers Ave.)** Two-story and basement brownstone two family dwelling. Hot air heat. Size 20x151.

**ABSOLUTE SALE**

**177-179 E. 73d St.** (Near 3d Ave.) Five-story brick stable and garage. Size 40x102.2.

**ESTATE SALE**

**Est. Chas. H. Reinburg, Dec'd.** **207, 209, 217, 219, 221 Lexington Ave.** **BROOKLYN, N. Y.** Five two-story brick dwellings. Size 18x50x100 each. **PIERCE & HOPKINS, Esqs., Atty.** 233 Broadway, N. Y. C.

**Write for Booklet**

**Imph. Day**  
Auctioneer.

**WESTCHESTER REAL ESTATE.**

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